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The Mycenaean Mysteries

A Neo-Pagan Alternative Belief System

Joseph W. Teller

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Mycenaean Mysteries : A Quick Introduction

Mycenaean Mysteries are an ongoing project to introduce a new path of passage and religious belief to the present Neo-Pagan community.

Like anything within the Neo-Pagan Community, we do not exist in a vacuum. I have been trained in several traditions and paths of the present community, and have learned much from them, but have found that a personal lack of hereditary connection to some of the pantheons and belief systems involved have often made my practice of Celtic or Shamanistic systems to become clumsy and sometimes ineffective for me personally. Thus, to find my own way, I went forth on a combination research project and personal path searching for what path would be best for myself.

The Mycenaean Mysteries are based upon a personal interface between myself and the aspects of the Early religious system and belief of the area now known as Greece, a personal comfortable status with many of the gods and goddesses of the pantheon therein which I could not find in the Celtic, Norse or American Indian belief systems. Many hours of painstaking research into the true culture, beliefs, gods and means of worship practiced by the early Mycenaens have resulted in this ongoing system of belief. It is not for all, but if you feel a true connection between yourself, the mythologies, the social structure and the beliefs involved then perhaps this path is for you.

The Mycenaean belief system is not a total "re-creationist" idea, nor the structuring of a system out of whole cloth, but like any belief system stemming from another time and blossoming into a Neo-Pagan tradition it comes from a combination of both. The land of Mycenae has gone through not one but two dark ages in its time, and much of the original material was lost or destroyed or very badly distorted by the people that would pass through it as their conquerors, and so I have had to take some liberty to the myths, sorting them according to the values and theology they present as to whether they were of these people and if so trying to prune out the changes made by centuries of

conquest. This is an ongoing project, and the belief structure will be added to as new material is encountered and adapted, but the basic structure outlined in the pages of work already completed will for the most part remain stable, with each person who takes up the system adding their own touch to the system.

Thus, if you choose this path, you will be forming and helping to form the belief system for yourself and for others, making your actions and writings just as important as those that have now been finished. Few religions or belief paths truly allow the many members within it to shape the system to their own needs and to bring about change. Myceneaeen Mysteries does.

If you are reading this file online a BBS or from a printout of such, or on a distributed disk, there should be several other text files here for you to read over, so please do so and feel free to distribute it at will among your fellow Neo-Pagans and all open minded non-pagan friends. Only through the greatest number of people getting involved can we do the greatest amount of improvement and gain personal enlightenment on this path.

* Love, Trust & Community : The key of Myceneae *

Myceneaeen Mysteries : Theological Answers

The purpose of this document is to explain some of the positions of The Myceneaeen Belief system that are considered important and controversial to other Religious groups, many times to the point where they will place their views not only in public view but to enforce them upon others not of their beliefs 'for their own good'. These positions are important, as they help show where we stand and also explain a bit more of what we are really about. These views are not forced on the membership of the Laos, but are the official accepted policies, beliefs and viewpoints of the organization in today's world - based on the overall religion.

Contraceptive Devices.

We realize the importance of life, as most nature-oriented religions do, and have a high respect for it and for the right of all to live. On the other hand we strongly believe in the right to choose one's path and actions in life. Thus, because of these factors, and in consideration of the high risk of disease in today's social circles, we support the use of all non-destructive Contraceptive means to prevent the spread of disease and the possibility of unwanted children being conceived. We do not support, on the other hand, operative contraception through vasectomy or sterilization - since these cause an actual mutilation of the body and because they are both questionable in recent studies as causes of increased cancer rates. We have a strong belief in taking responsibility for our actions, and to utilize contraceptive devices is to take responsibility in one's sexual activities.

Homosexuality/Bi-Sexuality.

These concepts in Sexuality are not nor ever have been in our beliefs or those of the original Myceneaeens anything but Natural. To call such actions and feelings perverse, or worse, is to deny the realities of nature and of the human condition.

We are born bi-sexual and make our choices based on environmental enforcement. We accept Homosexuality and Bi-sexuality as true parts of life, not something to be encouraged nor discouraged, but accepted as normal.

Public Nudity.

This one is obvious and simple, throughout most of the Neo-Pagan community it has always been : if you feel comfortable and won't be making too many others uncomfortable then feel welcome to any level of dress or undress that suits you. It is suggested that among a Damos that a full level of acceptance and knowing each others bodies, at least by sight, be eventually accomplished to improve the ability of the Damos to work as a true group bound in the love and trust they have declared (if you can't trust to be nude in someone's presence you probably can't trust them entirely). This will be difficult for some, it is suggested that if a member seems uncomfortable with

this that they be introduced to it slowly by the rest of the group so they become more comfortable. Not only does this build trust, but it can also help in keeping tension levels down and to improve health of the group overall in some ways.

Smoking.

The smoking of tobacco in today's society is deeply enmeshed, but slowly people are bring the realization of the damage of utilizing this herb as an addictive substance regularly. We also understand the difficulties of eliminating the effects of it upon the body in withdrawal. Considering all this, there shall be no usage of such materials within ritual or within a celebration's public confines (the exception is the use of pure, natural, un-chemically treated Indian tobacco for use in American Indian smoking rituals - which are rare and very limited in scope or exposure). If a smoker chooses to do so at a celebration they must go off away from the Damos and Guests to a secluded area where their second-hand smoke cannot affect anyone else in the group. The Damos should join in on trying to help the smoker get past the addiction and back to a sense of personal worth where such is unneeded (all addiction is caused by a sense of personal inferiority and incompleteness).

Ritual Drugs.

The use of these substances should only be within certain very controlled circumstances, under extreme supervision by people who are experienced and obviously personally balanced in the matter. The use of illegal or highly controlled drugs is not encouraged and anyone choosing to do so are doing so as an individual, not as a representative of the Laos. Again, the main word is caution with all drugs if you don't understand all the risks then don't use the substance.

Alcohol.

The Myceneaens were the inventors of Beer and several other naturally fermented alcoholic drinks, and so we cannot deny this part of the past nor the religious aspects of it. Any naturally fermented alcohol is acceptable for libation in Ritual and in celebration, but the taking of distilled alcohol shall not be within Ritual (its all right for celebration though). Unless a ritual is specifically to Dionysus, the taking of enough alcohol to be considered 'Drunk' in circle is to be frowned upon and felt offensive. Becoming drunk in a celebration if so wished is acceptable, so long as one maintains the rules of hospitality and does not attempt to do such morally wrong things as driving intoxicated (Hosts be warned that if a guest is so intoxicated you are under obligation to make sure they either have a ride home with a non-intoxicated person or that sleeping space, at least upon your floor, is made available to them). Alcohol in small amounts acts as a natural remover of the mental shields that can block ones ability to perceive the powers of nature and oneself, thus being useful in this way.

Abortion.

This is for many groups one of the most discussed area of personal choice. In Myceneae belief, ones spirit is not found within an embryo until the finish of the third month, and so we support the right of a woman to choose whether or not to take such an action, but do want her to consider all of the available options before doing such. Life is precious, both that of a mother and that of a child, but an existing life will hold priority over a yet-to-be born, since if an abortion does occur the spirit of the child will find another body to gain re-entrance into the life-cycle. We do support the use of all natural abortifacient herbs and drugs over physical operations, but again this is the choice of the mother and not for the religion to enforce.

Pornography.

We believe that the true pornography in the world is depiction of humanities cruelties unto itself for the purpose to glorify it and encourage it. This means we label books and movies of a purely violent nature to be Pornographic (Examples of such are 'Faces of Death', 'The Green Berets' or any of the numerous 'slasher' films). Additionally we feel that films of a sexual nature that show women as inferior, mere sex objects or actually depict violent rape as something its not to be pornographic (ex: The Story of O). We have no objections to sexuality in books in films, displays of nudity or love within such. We also oppose Child-pornography, bestiality and slavery of any kind.

Sexual Responsibility.

Mycenaean beliefs have nothing in opposition to group sex or group marriages, from Menage-a-trois to full multifaceted tribal families. We do have a strong ruling of community to regulate ourselves, and to reduce the risks of disease and other related problems. Any member of a Damos who has a sexually transmutable disease should warn all other members of the Damos. When a person enters into a Damos they must expose such info to the members, to protect all. If a member of a Damos is in a relationship with someone outside the Damos they should refrain from sexual contact with members inside the Damos, unless sure that they are clear of such afflictions. Relationships within the Damos should be encouraged, as this will prevent an influx of diseases from outside unknown sources. Members of a Damos who are sexually active in any way should seek out a medical check for such problems routinely and should share the results with the members. Keeping everyone within the Damos healthy is of import to all members of the Damos. Remember a Damos is more than just a group of friends and acquaintances as is common in most Neo-Pagan groups, it is an extended family and community.

Historical Context

The Mycenaean Era is not the Greece of Homer, and has many of its own unique differences that set it off from that Era. It is sometimes known as the Golden Age or Heroic Age of the ancient land we call Greece. Fledgling borne from migrants coming into the area from Syria and Persia during the Empire of Crete, the Mycenaeans were a willful folk, who accepted the rule of Crete until the Minoans fell from power by a complex series of events that caused them to abandon the Mainland and Isles of Greece and vanish back into the mists of History. Neither The Minoans nor the Mycenaeans were remembered, until our own 1840's (AD) when the ruins were discovered and slowly excavated (a process still uncompleted to this day).

Egypt, it has been said, introduced government to the world (and Bureaucracy and all that goes with it). Minos introduced the concept of Laws governing all equally (which Homer's Greece would rediscover in its own era) and the value of colonization & trade. Each had its religions and cults, but it was in Mycenaean that did rise truly human gods and goddesses - those who could weep or laugh, who did not simply hold themselves aloof from the majority of the population but who were close and intricately associated with their people.

In concept, and in Mycenaean Myth, we are all descended from the gods. We are all their children, and we are all working towards learning what we must to take our proper places beside them one day in a future existence. We all have within us the ability to perform feats of wonder, magic as we call it, through our own ability of will and perception.

As children of the gods and goddesses, we are imperfect only in that we have not yet learned the ways to best utilize our own abilities and to work with nature thoroughly - as Neo-Pagans we can work towards this goal, unlike those who refuse to open their eyes to their own ability and instead falsely believe that nature is a force to be battled and conquered instead of one that we are part of and must work with in order to survive. We are not in any way perfect, we do not have 'the one true path' or the 'one way to enlightenment', we have simply chosen a path in this belief system and religion that serves our personal growth (some may even walk this path and then later chose another closer to their own hearts in some way). We ask that others accept the fact that we have chosen this path of our own free will, if they ask for any information we shall give it freely, and that we ask that they be tolerant of us in our every day lives and not show bigotry against us for our belief path.

The Mycenaean Era, historically lasted from approx. 1700 BC, as the Minoan Empire collapsed inward, and prospered through till 1120 BC when the last shreds of it fell beneath the onslaught of the invading Dorians, who were the ancestors of Homer's Greece. The fall of Mycenaea brought with it a terrible 400 years of what has been called the 'Greek Dark Age' for the invaders destroyed all the knowledge of writing, and much of the culture and technology of the people of the land that was then Greece. They had come down out of the Northern parts of Central Europe, outnumbering the Mycenaeans and being experts at large scale war, still it took them from 1190 BCE to 1120 BCE to fully conquer the Mycenaeans.

When the Dorians invaded and conquered the people, they destroyed what was then the most advanced civilized people in Europe. Mycenae had the benefits of the technology of the Minoans and the advantages of a widespread sea-trade with Syria, Italy, Sicily, Spain, Egypt, Rhodes, Persia and even possibly the Isles of Britain. This widespread trade made them one of the richest people, and their willingness to exchange knowledge and goods made them welcome in many ports. Mycenae had colonized villages in many lands, to serve as trading posts with native peoples. Their only major war was, that which we know now as the Trojan War, in 1200 BC (approx.), was a successful enterprise supposedly based on principle instead of greed.

Mycenae, like the native peoples of the Americas, were slowly worn down and defeated by an enemy they had sought to not war with but to trade with. The Dorians came first as raiders, then in larger numbers as they fled south from either hostile weather conditions or an unknown northern invader, and were not to be appeased with simply the lands of the neighbors of the Mycenaean, such as the Hittites, but wanted the rich trade of the Black and Mediterranean Seas. They did not have a written language, but were evidently of similar stock of that which the Mycenaean had once come from centuries before and spoke a similar tongue. They destroyed the citadels, palaces and shrines, burning many to the ground in their fury. They slew the learned and enslaved the poor and agricultural people to serve their own economy - they were not the peaceful folk that Homer first tries to show them to be, in Homer's day, after the ages, Mycenae was forgotten and Minoan Empire a wispy memory of long ago.

Parts of the culture and its gods and goddesses were still so strongly enmeshed in the people that remained that the Dorians adapted it into their own rather than try to fight its existence, changing it to fit their own values and warlike natures. Thus the Mycenaean Age faded away in history and memory until the 1840's AD when the ruins of Mycenae were discovered and the Archaeological Society of Greece began to recover its forgotten past.

Much of what we have to work with in our beliefs are based on the records of archaeological findings, the eventual deciphering of the few tablets and inscriptions in the ancient language of the people (Many of which were simply old accounting records) and the myths that have survived even the purging and nature of the Homeric era. Vocal records always change tales with the telling, and thus it has been painstakingly difficult to produce what these pages attempt to do. Much has had to be assumed in my research as the information is not available, and some has been modified to suit our modern times and needs. Thus this is not a recreation, no more than Arn Dracht Fan can claim an absolute reconstruction of Celtic Druidism, but a new view for the present and hopefully the future.

Each Wanax is responsible for seeing that their Damos sits down and somehow develops a name for their Damos, and it is by this name that they will be known to other Damosi. It is suggested that Greek names or ones related to the places they choose to name sacred or to the local Native American Indian names be used (We, as members of the Mycenean belief must realize the rights of the natives of the lands we presently live in and also respect and honor their gods, goddesses and local nature spirits and beliefs, for like the original Myceneans we accept the validity of local deities as much as our own, some being our own known by other names and some being local powers like the dozens of river gods and nature spirits found in ancient Greece). If a name is not to be in Greek or in line with a Native American group then it should in some way reflect the nature of the people involved and their own goals together. Names, preferably, should not be more than ten words in length and not less than two. At the end of each name shall be added the word Damos, to identify it as a part of the Laos.

For the present I have chosen to act as the Basileus of the 'organization', that is I wish to be a personage who will be the arbitrator (if requested by all sides) in disputes between any two or more Wanaxi or Damosi dealing with the material in my structure or in a gathering of Damosi. I will also, for the moment, hold the position of a communications point between any of the further spread Damosi. I hold this position only until we have someone who can serve better for either position and who is willing to take on the duties - the position holds no true power over other Wanaxi or the greater Damosi unless they choose to have me arbitrate. This position I will hold no longer than ten years, and preferably much less. Once a hundred Wanax are established they will have the power, by a majority decision, to decide when to replace the Basileus and with who (the who must be willing to take the office).

I also ask that all Wanaxi record their record of activities (which we will call, for lack of better terminology your Damosi's Book of Records) in photocopy, ASCII text file or to be Handwritten/typed/carboned and pass this duplicate on to me to keep and utilize for communicating with all the members of the Laos (the people, in greek) of the Mycenaea faith, either within newsletters, computer files or whatever - based on the needs of each individual of the faith. This is a matter of choice of the Wanax personally, if they feel they need secrecy for some reason that is their choice and they may choose not to send such to me. I am not in a position of power in this path, simply a guide for part of the way and then it is up to your own selves to decide where you will go dealing with the path, your Wanax, your damos and your life-cycles.

Many of the ancient titles and positions within Mycenae are no longer of great import in today's society, but might one day become of import. The E-qe-tai (ee-kay-tie) were the liaison between the temples and the military, I suggest that this be a position given by each Wanax to a member of their Damos when they feel the need for someone to act as a Liaison between the Damos and any other Damos, a messenger of sorts between groups, and also to serve as such if the group comes into contact with the press or other public media. This position need not be a permanent one, and several may be bestowed this title at one time if more than one series of liaisons are necessary. The Ko-Re-te (kove-ray-tay) were military commanders within a Damos, we have no need of such at present, unless the Wanax of a group chooses that members of their Damos should learn a martial art or weapon skill for personal growth - then the Ko-Re-te will be the title given to a teacher within the group (You should not expect members of your Damos to be taught in such things by a person outside the Laos, nor can teaching be forced or required, only requested or suggested).

The Lawagetas was in ancient times the 'Leader of the Host', a military leader for a collection of the Laos from more than one Damos for a particular purpose. Obviously this is not a needed position within our present structure. The Pa-si-re-u was the official responsible within a Damos responsible for the bronze smiths, again a title I cannot see the need to restore (If anyone is skilled at this art and wishes to offer it as a teaching to members of your Damos, then grant them the title).

The klawiphoroi were the key-bearers, always female, of the temple. Since our temples, shrines, groves and altars will be most likely within other buildings or outside and there is no plan to purchase buildings at present for this purpose (for we are a poor folk) this title will remain among the unused.

Each individual of the Laos, including those not of a Damos, may consider themselves Mycenaean Priests and Priestesses as long as they choose to follow this path of Neo-Paganism. There are no paian (non-clerical followers), though there may be members of other faiths present at a ritual, celebration or gathering - so long as they are willing to accept the rules of hospitality. Due to legalities, children are brought into ritual rarely - they are not yet on this path and should not be forced upon it like some religions do. We must not make the mistakes that many mainstream religions have before. They can be present at an open celebration, but should not be brought into ritual until they are old enough to understand the beliefs and concepts, say not before their 16th birthday (this will be an arbitrary choice between the Wanax and the parents).

Finances are the choice of the to deal with, and whether they will handle the finances of the Damos or have a separate person appointed treasurer or choose to keep no finances for the group but run the group as a 'donate anything but money' operation. I would like to hear from the Wanaxi on how they are handling their finances and the operations herein, especially any who set up their Damos as a physical communal household or farm site.

The Laws Of Hospitality For Myceneaens

1. A Guest always has the right to leave a Host's home, lands, celebration or gathering when they wish (this is not possible always in the middle of a ritual and can only be done when the officiator of the ritual grants it magically etc.), without harm or threat of harm, with all that they brought with them into the locale.
2. A Host always has the right to ask a Guest to leave their home, lands, celebration, gathering or ritual without conflict of a physical or verbal nature, and to take with them all they brought with them into the locale.

3. A Host has the right to request an armed guest to peace-bond, remove from the locale or to take a weapon of any obvious nature, unless necessary for a ritual taking place, until it the guest is ready to leave without argument or conflict.
4. A Host has the right to request a guest not utilize or even bring into their home, lands, celebration, gathering or ritual any substance or device that may be legally questionable or outlawed or physically harmful to the Hosts health or that of other guests or members of the Damos. (this may be anything from drugs, alcohol, poisons, cigarettes, flame-throwers etc. all by the Host's discretion).
5. A Host may ask the following of a personal rule of hygiene or social concept be followed by a guest while within the home, celebration, ritual, lands etc. (EX: the removal of shoes before entering the house, the washing of hands, maintaining a low level of noise due to someone else sleeping, sharing in the breaking of bread, etc. by the host's discretion).
6. Both Host and Guest are bound by a rule of trust - none shall carry out violence of a physical or psychic nature against those present or they shall be in violation of the rules of Hospitality and nullify all such rules at that point.
7. Neither Host nor guest shall steal from the other - either doing such shall be in violation of the rules of Hospitality and they shall be annulled at that point.
8. The Host may ask one service of the guest if they are to share meal, sleep within the hosts area, or in other words impose on the host in any manner. This service cannot require the leaving of the hosts area, nor be of an illegal, personally distasteful or harmful way, but will most probably be of a simple manner (and not the tasks set out historically in legend) such as assisting with the setting of the table, chopping of wood for the fire, etc. This is not mandatory, simply suggested in conceptual context of the original Mycenaean Society.
9. The Host and guest, if of different religions, will not seek to force their beliefs upon the other - discussion is allowed, but not obvious attempts to convert or proselytize.
10. The Host and guest (and members of the Hosts Damos) will not seek to force their affections on each other sexually - this does not rule out flirtation, involvement or seduction, but does rule out harassment, forced sex and rape. If a person says they are not interested then their word is final and any further consideration should be personally curbed. Violation of this rule invalidates the rules of hospitality in the situation.
11. The Host may request of a Guest reimbursement for any supplies that have been used in the feeding or entertainment of the guest that are considered excessive. Additionally a guest is expected to repay any bills of an excessive nature (such as those of long distance telephone calls) that they are responsible for.
12. A Guest at Ritual is expected to accept the Authority of the officaries within the ritual area as absolute, and shall not question their authority or actions while within the ritual area. Nor shall a Guest seek to disrupt a ritual from within or from outside of it while it is being carried out.
13. A Guest is expected to provide a gift for a host or the hosts Damos when visiting for ritual (A food dish or libation is the common practice) or celebration. This is waved if not more than one days notice has been given or if the Guest claims a truly impoverish condition in their own life.

The above may seem simplistic, obvious or unnecessary, but I feel it is important that we have a set of rules for those who cannot see the obvious and to protect all involved. Further, I'd like to request that any member of the Laos who has had the Rules violated by a Host or Guest (especially those rules dealing with violence, Forced affection, theft etc.) to report them by name to me, anyone who has been found in such violation with witnesses by members of any three Damosi will be reported as such and publicized by us internally to be avoided as Guest or Host (and of course, if a legal violation occurs any Host is welcome to report them as such to the authorities).

Remember that a Guest or host cannot be considered held by the rules of Hospitality if they have not seen them and agreed to them beforehand. Feel free to suggest that other Neo-pagan groups accept these rules themselves - this does not have to be just a Mycenaean only concept.

Ethics & Concepts Of Conduct

You take, by using this work and collection of beliefs and the title of Myceneaen Priest or Priestess, the responsibility for your own life and actions in it. Every time you make a decision in life you are exercising your freedom and are responsible for your actions. With knowledge and power come great responsibility, to yourself, your Damos, your Waxan, the Laos, your homeland, your birth family, the human race and that of the entire planet. There are no 'evil' forces manipulating you or your actions, no devils or demons exist save in the minds of others (and if any do exist in your own mind then you must cast them out). No amount of alcohol, drugs or influence shall change the fact that you are still responsible for what you choose to do and not to do.

Yes, we recognize that there are forces beyond our ability to fully conceive in this reality, that at times the gods and the goddesses might interfere with our lives, remember that there is something to be learned from each success and every failure, that they do not wish you to suffer - they simply wish you to learn and advance to one day rise above the need for the state of being what you are at present - bound within a limiting fleshly body for this cycle and for each you have and will have given to you until you have learned all this existence can teach and advance to a level where you may enjoin with the gods and see beyond our present.

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